16: Hanks & Hanks E,P-4,5 (1938-1941) 1950
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Northern Blackfoot
Blackfoot Reserve

their houses looking neat is also seen from the efforts on the part of some families to plant shrubbery, to lay a concrete walk from the road to the door-step, to keep the grass short in the front yard, to hang lace curtains in the windows, to give white visitors the cup and saucer with the flower design, and to arrange the furnishings of the living room beforehand. From this we infer a need for better furnishing, particularly on the part of the poorer families.

Other indications of a higher standard of living might be plumbing, improved sanitation, electricity, and the various machines of the modern house. We have never heard anyone speak of the desire for running water in a house, though one of the three houses with electricity has piped water into the house from an electrically driven pump. At the mines, where running water is available in the community wash-house, the Indians use these facilities constantly for washing and laundering. Indeed, it is said that the Indians at the mines maintain the highest standard of cleanliness on the reserve. The only available source of running water other than the mine is the hospital, which provides the sole bathing facilities. When there is no running water available, inside toilets and cesspools are inconceivable. Some Indians living near a power line have considered introducing electricity into their homes. As the public utility company charges the expense of a transformer installation to the consumer, and wiring and fixtures are a further expense, most Blackfoot have rejected the idea after the initial inquiry.

Most of these attributes of a higher standard of living are considered not very important by the Blackfoot, but one must not reach conclusions on this basis alone. Through the countryside of southern Alberta, many white farmers also are without running water and electricity. In small towns there is frequently no sewage system, and outside toilets are assumed. Moreover, most of these accessories require some source of power. If whites are unable to afford these conveniences, still less could the Indians on their income.

Some Indians have purchased automobiles, though they soon discover that maintenance is a very costly affair. Frequently this has induced them to abandon the car. On the other hand the condition of the roads, the love of horses and the greater utility of the latter in rough country and cold winters, the greater carrying capacity of a wagon over a passenger car, all make team and wagon much more serviceable on the reserve.

824 PLANTS IN CRAFT AND FOLKLORE

Abies lasiocarpa

The needles were used as a deodorant and were packed with stored items, saddle pads, or burned in a household smudge.

Acer glabrum

[386] [415] Small cases of the folded bark contained the grease which was mixed with ochre to make paint. A larger carrying case was made of the same material and worn under the left arm.

Allium spp.

[237] A piece of hide was dipped in a decoction of Allium bulb and used to shine arrows. The bulbs were also rubbed on quivers as a deodorant.

Amelanchier alnifolia

[431] [524] [222] Favors were asked while presenting a gift of four of the berries. The receiver was obliged to return the goodwill. Girls played a game while harvesting the berries. After some berries had been gathered the girls would sit together and hold their breath while another called out 'tops, tops, tops' at a regular beat. Each girl put a berry in her bag for every call and the one who held her breath the longest won all the other girls' berries.

Anemone patens

[522] [514] Because the plant acted as vesicant, pranks were played on unsuspecting people who would ask someone to fetch them some toilet paper. It worked especially well at night.

Arctostaphylos uva-ursi

534 [796] The dry berries were put in rattles (Fig. 33). They were preferred over stones because they were lighter and didn't make dust, a constant

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 109]

824 [514] [515] Artemisia frigida and ludoviciana

Both sages were used as toilet paper; frigida was especially for children. Ludoviciana was often put in moccasins as a foot deodorant.

824 302 Delphinium bicolor

Women would shine and straighten their hair through the use of an infusion of this plant.

Gaillardia aristata

[515] A footwash was made from the infused flower heads.

Hierchloe odorata

[237] A hair tonic was made by mixing sweetgrass-water with the sticky substance of boiled hooves. Red ochre, used on clothing and directly on the body, was often mixed with sweetgrass-water to make it smell good.

Juniperus spp.

A footwash was made from the infusion of the plant. It was also used to sooth the face after whiskers were plucked.

Lygodesmia juncea

[237] An infusion of the stems was mixed with grease and applied as a hair tonic.

Osmorhiza occidentalis

[515] Women used the root as a feminine deodorant. Diapers were sweetened with an infusion of the root.

Salix spp.

Willow roots were dried and crushed, then soaked in water and grease.
[278] The tonic was applied to the hair for dandruff and it made the hair sleek and straight.

20: Hungry Wolf I-4,5 (no date) 1980
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

824 grow all over the prairies, together and apart. The women's sage has smaller leaves and many more seed pods than the man's sage, which grows more bushy. They both have gray-colored leaves and a bitter taste.

824 757 Women used this sage for all kinds of things, internal and external. As a brew it was given for colds and chest problems, as well as other ailments. Many of these practices were taught to individual women doctors in their dreams and visions.

824 752 302 841 They used this sage as a poultice for cuts and bloody noses. They used it as a padding inside their moccasins, for smelly feet, or under their armpits for a deodorant. They used to pick the leaves and make them into a pad during menstruation. The pads not only absorbed the blood but they also served as medication to keep the skin from getting raw. 514 Bunches of this sage were commonly used for toilet wiping.

PREPARING FOOD

262 With all the new foods that civilization has brought, the Indian people don't eat nearly as healthily as they used to. But one thing still remains the same: the staple Indian diet is meat, along with some kind of root vegetable. In the old days that was wild meat, mostly buffalo, and wild roots like camas and turnips. Nowadays the meat comes mostly from the butcher shop and the vegetables from the grocery store. Unfortunately, the children take most readily to all the other junk food that is so available today. This food is so sweet and easy to eat that some children don't even like meat and vegetables anymore.

I grew up with the taste of wild meat, cooked intestines, and berry soups. I still consider them favorite foods. I never did know of a Blackfoot Indian who was a vegetarian. But I have learned about modern foods and how to pick the good 872 ones from the bad ones. Even at the boarding school they

drunk to ease delivery at birth or to bring on an abortion. The crushed leaves used to be bound to itchy parts of the body. 844 847 757

PRAIRIE SMOKE (*Geum triflorum*): Called "lying on its belly" because its roots grow along close to the ground, it is still dug up, scraped, washed, and then crushed and boiled to treat sore throats, as well as sore, swollen, or snow-blinded eyes. The roots can be crushed and mixed with melted grease to treat sore gums, or mixed with melted kidney fat as a drink to treat ulcers. This kidney fat mixture can be applied to body sores such as chapped lips, blisters from riding, and sore nipples from nursing. The leaves are also brewed for a person spitting blood. Finally, ripe seeds gathered from the white flowers can be crushed to make a perfume. 824 757 752 303

PUFFBALLS: Known as "dusty stars," these fungi are thought to be the remnants of fallen stars, which dot the Prairies. The puffy substance, used to catch sparks, was an essential part of fire-making kits. Puffballs were also held against bleeding noses to stop the flow, and applied to cuts on horses. The yellow contents were brewed for a drink to treat hemorrhage. They were also used as a compress for hemorrhoids, and by women while menstruating. 821 824 372 757 232 757

SAGE (*Artemisia gnaphalodes*): "Man-sage" had many uses in addition to those already cited by Atsitsina. The basis of a decoction for treating coughs, its leaves could be chewed to stimulate appetite. It was also a main source of "toilet paper" in the Old Days. Burning leaves created a smudge to drive away flies and mosquitoes; soft leaves placed in nostrils checked bleeding. And it sometimes was added to dried meat for seasoning, although it was not actually eaten. 824 [757] [261] [514] [751] [757] [263]

SAGE (*Artemisia frigida*): "Woman-sage," which grows together with man-sage, was used by women in the same way men used man-sage, except that women used it addi- [137] [841]

[p. 187-B]

796 778 575 425 [30] wrapped in the pipe bundle, that is, the only part of the bundle which was formerly taken out on the warpath. The transferrer also ties the bracelets, to which the small buffalo-stone is attached, around the wrist of the new owner and of his wife. (One of these bracelets is now missing.)

When this ceremony is ended the transferrer and his wife, and the new owner and his wife, rise and dance round the tipi, making four stops on the way. First comes the transferrer of the bundle, then the new owner, then the transferrer's wife, and lastly the wife of the new owner. During this dancing four wordless songs are sung.

The ceremony now completed, all present rise and dance, and the pipe is handed from one to another until it has been passed entirely around. During this dancing, in which the people do not move from their places, they sing the dance-songs, again without words. This closes the ceremony for that day.

The pipe is not bundled up after the ceremony. On the first night the new owner and his wife sleep on the right and the left side respectively of the exposed bundle, and do not rise until the former owner and his wife call the next morning before sunrise. As they enter the tipi they take a pinch of the sacred sweet balsam, chew it, and spit lightly on the new owner and his wife and their blankets, and help them to rise.

[824] [514]

122 my own defense, I will add that I delivered the tea without looking
[123] either left or right–but I still had no business going in there.

But the Chief does feel better today, and when finally he did get up, all was forgiven and the Chief was in the playful mood that suggests his usual self. The Chief combs out and re-braids his hair
[302] each morning. Contrary to vulgar opinion, Indian men do not always wear their hair in the same style, and this morning the Chief made four braids, one behind each ear and one in front of the ear. The Chief ties the ends of his braids with a length of red flannel, and when he had finished this job Jimmy came sneaking over and pulled one of the braids around beneath his nose and accused the Chief of having a moustache; whereupon the Chief offered to knock Jim on his butt if he was not careful.

[264] Jim says that he doesn't like meat for breakfast and that he customarily takes only a very light morning meal ("I'm not much of appetite, less if I'll get hungry could eat whole beef. Usual I just having couple coffee and a toast"). His light breakfast of this morning included fried eggs, a huge stack of his incomparably bad pancakes, and several cups of coffee from the remarkable old granite coffeepot which, despite unspeakable neglect, insists upon producing consistently marvelous coffee.

[514] The Chief eats well, and although he frequently turns from the table to blow his nose with his fingers, this gesture does not offend. The old fellow has so much innate dignity that he could perform the same act in church without embarrassing the most fastidious of angels.

By the time the school bus from Babb went roaring down the road, loaded with Indian kids from across the mountains, we had eaten, done the dishes, and were planning to go to town. I am anxious to have the electrical service restored so that I can do some recording.
[126] The little battery-operated tape recorder ($140.00 worth) which I purchased for just such an emergency as this has failed completely. That is the last time I buy a made-in-Japan product–I don't give a damn *who* puts his name on it!

Later: Immediately after lunch, we drove to town in my station wagon. I cashed a cheque at the bank, bought some 35mm film and an immense amount of chow–including a whole side of bacon, which I don't eat. Since Jim has given me his room and bed, I figured that the least I could do was to pick up the tab–almost fifty bucks. At least we'll eat for a while. Jim has a liquor permit (Mon-
[273] tana has a State Liquor Control Board which requires that anyone, Indian or White, must purchase a permit before being allowed to